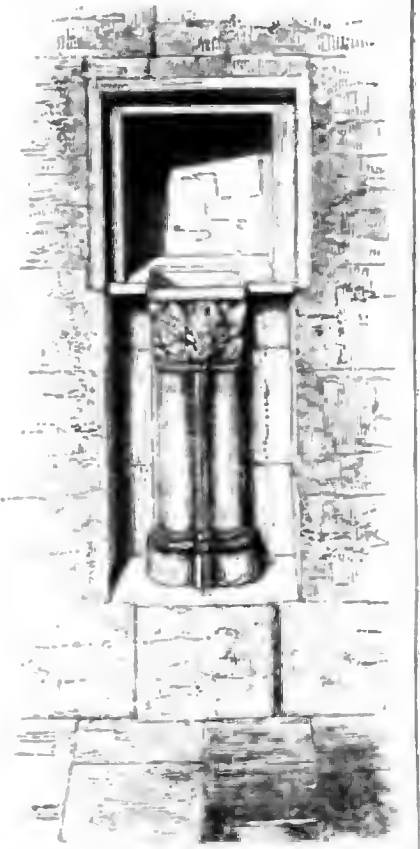


## PISCINE.



From Haddenham Church, Buckinghamshire.



From Aylesbury Church, Buckinghamshire.

Apostles, Saints Peter and Paul, upon which there were expended the sums following:—

Imprimis, for the workmanship only, ..	£.	s.	d.
or labour of the masons .. .. .	21	17	9
Item, for the taking down of the wall where the window was placed ..	0	16	9
— for lime and gravel .. .. .	1	0	0
— for 20 cwt. of iron bought for the said window .. .. .	4	4	0
— for the labour of the smith ..	3	5	4
— for Caen stone bought for the same .. .. .	5	0	0
— for glass and the labour of the glaziers .. .. .	6	13	4
Total .. .. .	42	17	2

The sum of 8*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* was given by certain friends for the said window, and the remainder of the money was furnished by the prior.

This prior was Henry de Estria, and the peculiar management of the heads of the lights, with their pendent bosses, Professor Willis remarks, may be compared with the similar bosses of his choir door (of which he gives representations).

The interior of this tracery is in very good preservation, with the exception of the pendent bosses and the stones whence they were suspended, which have totally disappeared. The outside of the window is, however, in a very bad condition for the purpose of the antiquary; for, apparently on account of the decayed state of its surface, the tracery has undergone the process of splitting, namely, the whole of the outer part has been pared down to the glass, and fresh worked in Portland stone; Portland stone mullions, or *monials* as they are more properly called, have also been supplied; and as this repair was executed at a period when this class of architecture was ill-understood, the mouldings are very badly wrought, which, in conjunction with the colour of the Portland stone, has given the window a most ungenuine air. However, the interior is as good as ever it was, and it is on account of its date, as well as for its beauty, a most valuable example.

There are some peculiarities in the manner

of distributing the mouldings of this window which are shown in the figures. The heads of the lights are worked with different mouldings from those of the tracery above, and the increased size and the importance of the two central monials are given, not by an additional layer or order of mouldings, as usual, but by separating the other mouldings.

In Professor Willis' print the mouldings are given reduced from the outlines made by the cymagraph, a small instrument invented by the professor, which causes a steel point, running over the mouldings, to move a pencil point, and give their form with unerring accuracy on paper. This instrument was brought before the Institute of British Architects, and described by the professor himself a year or two since.

It may be added that the print of the window presented above is a portion of the head only, for the great advantage of giving it to a larger scale. The section of the mouldings is as nearly like those made by the cymagraph as can very well be. The window is one of the most beautiful examples in England, and it evidently attracted great admiration at the time it was executed, as several decorated windows in the churches for many miles round Canterbury are plainly designed in imitation of it.

C. J. R.

## THE ORIGIN AND USE OF PISCINE.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS OF THOSE AT HADDENHAM, AND AYLESBURY CHURCHES.

PISCINA, from the Latin "piscis," a fish, was anciently a fish-pond. The same word had other applications; a place where cattle were watered, and a large basin for swimming in, either in the open air, or in the baths, being likewise so denominated. The term has also been applied to the basin, near the court of Solomon's temple, in which cattle were washed previous to the sacrifice; and Mr. Britton (Dictionary of the Architecture and Archaeology of the Middle Ages), says, that the basin, which contained the water in a baptistry, was also formerly called a piscina. In later times, it

was synonymous with "lavacrum," and, in one of the senses of that word, with "ascrarium." There is much confusion in the old nomenclature of Gothic architecture, and we frequently find the same name, applied to objects of even opposite uses; and "lavatory," "fontella," "font," and "water drain," have each been used for "piscina." The last is now usually applied to the niche, or receptacle, on the south side of the altar in Gothic churches, in which the priest washed his hands, or emptied any consecrated vessel, as, for example, the water in which the chalice had been rinsed. The usual position was between the sedilia and the east wall; but is sometimes in the east wall itself. Three chantry piscinas, at Aylesbury, are in eastern walls. Occasionally, it is in the north wall, as at Ditchelling, Sussex, and Castor, Northamptonshire. As every altar required a piscina, we often find several in the same church, and frequently, when all trace of the original altar has disappeared. The most ancient piscinas, as at Salisbury and Lincoln cathedrals, had, according to Mr. Pugin, two basins, one for the ablutions of the hands, and the other for the rinsings of the chalice; and when the rubric, for receiving the ablutions of the chalice by the priest, became generally observed, the second basin was disused, the later piscinas having one basin only. However, it is remarkable, that there are early examples with one basin. In some churches, there is no piscina, nor any appearance of there having been one; the substitute in such cases was a hole in the pavement, at the south side of the altar; which is ordered in an ancient MS. of Injunctions for the diocese of Lincoln, preserved in the Bodleian library; but no such hole has yet been discovered. It is difficult to conceive, how the piscinas could ever have been suspended, as allowed in the ordinance of an ancient synod, quoted by Fosbroke ("Encyclopædia of Antiquities," vol. i, p. 96), where it is called "a font for washing the hands of the officiating priests, which may be either penile, or affixed to the wall, and furnish water." Is it likely, that the word font refers to another vessel, in which the hands were